

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Executive Director of Educational Services

Educational Services Committee: 26 June 2014

Subject: Results of the statutory consultation on the proposal to locate the new Our Lady and St Patrick's High School on the site currently occupied by the high flats in Bellsmyre

1. Purpose

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to inform the Educational Services Committee of the outcome of the statutory consultation process relating to the location of the new Our Lady and St Patrick's High School (OLSP).

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** It is recommended that Committee:

- a) note the responses to the statutory consultation by the Executive Director of Educational Services under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 on a proposal to re-locate Our lady and St Patrick's High School to the site currently occupied by the high flats in Bellsmyre;
- b) subject to obtaining all statutory consents, instruct the Executive Director of Educational Services and the Executive Director of Regeneration and Infrastructure to progress with the construction of a new Our Lady and St Patrick's High School on the Bellsmyre site and, upon conclusion, to relocate Our Lady and St Patrick's High School to the new location; and
- c) instruct the Executive Director of Educational Services to inform the relevant Scottish Government Ministers of the decision to progress the project in Bellsmyre.

3. Background

- 3.1** On 6 February 2013, Council approved a ten year capital plan which included a net capital budget of £8.5m for a new build OLSP, this sum being the Council's contribution towards a £22.5 million total build cost with Scottish Government funding of £14m. In February 2014, this budget was re-phased and increased to £8.65 million.
- 3.2** On 8 January 2014, following a statutory consultation held under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, the Educational Services Committee decided that neither of the two sites being proposed (Posties Park and the current school site) was acceptable for the new school, with the Posties Park site lacking community support and the current school site being too small and presenting significant difficulties during the construction phase.

The Committee therefore instructed the Executive Director of Educational Services to examine all potential sites, whether or not they had been previously considered and whether or not they were within the Council's ownership.

- 3.3** On 5 March 2014, the Educational Services Committee approved a recommendation by the Executive Director that a further statutory consultation be conducted on a proposal that the new school should be constructed on the land currently occupied by the high flats in Bellsmyre, a site which had only recently become available for such a project. This was the highest scoring site of 16 potential sites considered.
- 3.4** The consultation was duly conducted in accordance with the decision of Committee.

4. Main Issues

Consultation Responses

- 4.1** A summary of responses received is as follows.

Total responses: 54

Method of response

Email:	48
Letter:	3
Telephone:	3

Respondee

Group/organisation:	7
Parent:	13
Student:	0
Teacher:	2
Adult:	32

Response to the Bellsmyre proposal

For:	7
Against:	41
Neither:	6

- 4.1.1** The groups or organisations which responded were as follows:

<u>Group/organisation</u>	<u>For/against Bellsmyre</u>
Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Glasgow	Neither
Dumbarton Riverside FC	For
Argyll and Bute Council	Neither
OLSP branch of the Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association (SSTA)	Against
OLSP branch of the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS)	Against
P.E. department of OLSP	Against
Parent Council of OLSP	Against

- 4.2** As part of the consultation, the Executive Director of Educational Services conducted a public meeting in the Assembly Hall of Our Lady and St Patrick's High School on the evening of 26 March with approximately 95 people in attendance. The director also conducted meetings with the staff of Our Lady and St Patrick's High School on 31 March. A meeting was also held with the school's Pupil Council on 31 March. Notes of the three meetings are available for scrutiny.
- 4.3** Education Scotland conducted its own investigation into the educational benefits of the Bellsmyre site. A report of their findings was produced. It is available on both the Education Scotland and West Dunbartonshire websites (<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/> and <https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/>) and is provided as Appendix 2 to this report.
- 4.3.1** The Education Scotland report acknowledges the concerns of staff and parents about aspects of the Bellsmyre site and stresses how important it will be for the Council to address these concerns and to communicate effectively with all stakeholders. However, the report concludes that "the educational benefits of the implementation of the proposal for young people outweigh these concerns" and that Bellsmyre "is the most reasonable option available to the Council".
- 4.4** A number of themes emerged from the consultation responses and from the contributions at the public meeting and the meetings with the school's staff and pupils. The following paragraphs provide a summary of the arguments for and against the different options, together with other points made through the consultation process.
- 4.5** In general terms, many respondents, including some who opposed the proposal to re-locate the school to Bellsmyre, welcomed the Council's commitment to construct a new Our Lady and St Patrick's High School.
- 4.5.1** Respondents who supported the proposal highlighted the fact that the new secondary school, along with the new St Peter's/Aitkenbar/Early Education and Childcare Centre co-location and a significant house-building programme, would help to accelerate the regeneration of the Bellsmyre area to the benefit of local residents.
- 4.6** It was clear from the responses, both to this consultation and to the previous consultation on Posties Park and the existing school site, that there is a strong desire to see the school remain in Dumbarton, with no respondents in either consultation suggesting a move to any of the available sites in Vale of Leven.
- 4.6.1** In considering the responses of those opposed to the Bellsmyre site, it must be remembered that, following the rejection of the Posties Park site, there is no site available in Dumbarton which is practical, which lies within the Council's ownership, which would not involve significant additional expenditure and which is large enough to accommodate the required building, external social and traffic management spaces and 3 external sports pitches. Any site chosen will therefore involve compromises in terms of design and could involve additional financial commitments from the Council which would not allow the Council to demonstrate that it had delivered Best Value.

Group Responses

- 4.7** As indicated in paragraph 4.1.1 above, a number of groups or organisations responded to the consultation. These were as follows:

Archdiocese of Glasgow: welcomed the proposal to build a new OLSP but posed a number of questions about the proposed site and expressed no overall view on the suitability of the site. The questions raised by the Archdiocese were also raised by other consultees and are addressed in section 4.9 and 4.10 below. The matters raised also formed the basis of discussion between the Council and a representative of the Archdiocese, which is now further considering its position.

Dumbarton Riverside Football Club: favoured the Bellsmyre proposal.

Argyll and Bute Council: confirmed that it will continue to support current transport arrangements for the pupils from Argyll and Bute who currently attend OLSP. There are currently 52 such pupils who are transported to school in a dedicated bus.

OLSP branch of the SSTA: opposed the Bellsmyre proposal on a number of grounds and expressed a preference for the former convent site in Clerkhill.

OLSP branch of the EIS: opposed the Bellsmyre proposal on a number of grounds and indicated that the EIS members had lost confidence in the entire decision making process and believed that WDC does not value the pupils and staff of the school. These points have been further explored through meetings with the EIS and, when asked for clarification of the latter point, the EIS representative explained that the EIS had previously expressed support for the Posties Park location but believed their views had been ignored. (Note: the submission from the EIS claimed to be the unanimous view of the 75 members of the branch; however, it was later confirmed that only around 30 members had attended the meeting at which the submission had been discussed and the final submission had not been shared with EIS members within the school or with the WDC EIS Secretary prior to submission.)

OLSP's Physical Education Department: opposed the Bellsmyre proposal because of concerns about pupil and staff safety when accessing the sports pitch across the road from the school campus and concern that there would be fewer external sport pitches than are available in other WDC secondary schools.

OLSP Parent Council: opposed the Bellsmyre proposal on various grounds and proposed the Clerkhill site. (Note: it has been confirmed that the Parent Council made its submission without consulting the wider parent body on the content of the submission.)

- 4.8** Because many of the submissions from groups and individuals opposed to the Bellsmyre site repeated the same points, the submissions will not be analysed individually in this report. The following section will provide details and commentary on each of the points made in opposition to the Bellsmyre site, whether by one group or individual or by several and whether in writing or orally during the consultation meetings.

4.9 Arguments against the proposal to re-locate OLSP to Bellsmyre

4.9.1 *The school should remain in the west end of Dumbarton, where there have been Catholic secondary schools for over 100 years.*

It is acknowledged that there is a strong emotional attachment to the west end of the town among the Catholic community in Dumbarton. However, as previously agreed by Committee, the current school site is unsuitable and the only other site in the area (Clerkhill) has a number of very significant disadvantages. These are explained in paragraph 4.11.2 below. There is also no educational argument for retaining the school in the west end of the town as opposed to another location within the catchment area. Discussions with the Archdiocese have explored the possibility of reflecting the heritage and history of OLSP in the design of the new school.

4.9.2 *Bellsmyre is too far away from train stations.*

Currently, only 77 OLSP pupils (from a school roll of approximately 950) are in receipt of train passes to and from Dalreoch station from Balloch, Alexandria and Renton stations. Eligible pupils would be provided with passes for dedicated buses to take them to Bellsmyre. The proposed site for the new school is approximately 1.3 miles by a safe walking route from Dumbarton Central train station, easily within what is considered a reasonable walking distance for secondary school pupils.

4.9.3 *Bellsmyre is on the edge of the school's catchment area, with poor transport links.*

The current school building is also situated at an edge of the catchment area. In fact, there are good transport links from other parts of Dumbarton and Vale of Leven to Bellsmyre. The First Glasgow 206 bus runs between Westcliff and Haldane via Bellsmyre every 15 minutes until approximately 7.40 pm before reducing in frequency. There are also First Glasgow 1A and 1E services running from Glasgow to Balloch via Bellsmyre which operate half hourly until 6.00 pm. There are also McGill's buses (number 208) from Silverton to Westcliff from 6.00 pm – 10.00 pm, running every half hour. Finally, as stated above, Dumbarton Central train station is only 1.3 miles away, providing regular half-hourly services to Helensburgh, Renton, Alexandria and Balloch until late at night.

4.9.4 *Locating the school in Bellsmyre will discourage pupils from staying after school for supported study and school clubs.*

Attendance at these activities is currently very high, despite the fact that a significant number of pupils from Bonhill and elsewhere require to take two buses to get home in the evening from Castlehill. As stated above, there is a 15 minute bus service from Bellsmyre until after 7.00 pm (well after the end of supported study and almost all after-school activities) and less frequent buses thereafter.

4.9.5 *The Bellsmyre location will be inaccessible for pupils from Argyll and Bute.*

The 52 pupils who currently attend OLSP from Argyll and Bute travel by a dedicated bus provided by Argyll and Bute Council, whose Director of Education has confirmed in writing that this arrangement will continue if the school moves its location. As already indicated, the proposed site is only 1.3 miles by foot from Dumbarton Central train station with frequent trains available to Helensburgh.

4.9.6 *Buses will have difficulty accessing the proposed site in icy weather.*

The Roads section of the Council advises that Howattshaws Road is accessible in all but the most extreme weather conditions, during which access to any site would be problematic.

4.9.7 *Bellsmyre is an area known for crime and social unrest.*

There is no factual evidence to support the view that Bellsmyre is a more dangerous area than Castlehill, where the school is currently situated. The ongoing regeneration of Bellsmyre means that it is an area which is likely to be more prosperous in future years than it has ever been previously.

4.9.8 *Concerns from a small number of Bellsmyre residents about the numbers of pupils near their properties at lunchtimes and after school.*

This would be a likely response from residents of any area to which it is proposed that a school be relocated. Bellsmyre residents will benefit from the availability of high quality internal and external sports facilities for community use outwith school hours.

4.9.9 *Concerns about pupil safety walking to and from the new school.*

West Dunbartonshire Council already goes beyond its statutory obligation by providing transport to all secondary school pupils who live more than 2 miles from school by the shortest, safe walking route. A full assessment of walking routes will be made before the school opens and any necessary additional safety measures will be taken.

4.9.10 *Safety concerns about an increased number of pupils crossing the A82.*

A very large number of WDC primary and secondary school pupils currently cross the A82 safely every day. The three most likely crossing points if the school is re-located to Bellsmyre are currently served by an underpass, school crossing patrollers and (at Garshake Road) by both a pelican crossing and two school crossing patrollers. As stated in 4.9.9 above, a full assessment of walking routes will be undertaken before the school opens.

4.9.11 *Safety concerns about the proposed site's close proximity to electricity pylons and power lines.*

WDC commissioned an electromagnetic assessment of the boundary of the proposed site, with reference to the findings to the SAGE report on this subject.

The survey was carried out on the 7th May 2014, with the results confirming that the readings taken are significantly below the level recommended as the safe maximum by the SAGE report, the aim of which was “to bring together the range of stakeholders to identify and explore the implications for a precautionary approach to ELF EMF (Extremely low frequency electric and magnetic fields) and make practical recommendations for precautionary measures.”

The recommended goal of the SAGE study is to keep environments below a measurement of 400 n/T. The survey results along the site boundary, and in particular the boundary running closest to the overhead power lines, indicate that the maximum readings ranged from 60n/T to 190n/T. Within the UK industry, the Sage recommendations are considered conservative measures of biological electromagnetic protection. In this case, their recommended figures were not compromised or even approached. The school building, where pupils and staff will spend most of their time, will be a further 20 metres away from the pylons at its closest point, resulting in even lower levels within the building.

4.9.12 *Possible asbestos contamination of the site resulting from demolition of the high flats*

Under supervision of the Health and Safety Executive, extensive measures are being taken to remove all traces of asbestos from the high flats prior to their demolition. All demolition debris will be removed from the site in advance of the construction works commencing on the new school. There will therefore be no asbestos on the site if the proposal is approved when construction begins in March 2015.

4.9.13 *Increased traffic congestion due to planned co-located primary schools and Early Education and Childcare Centre*

As part of the planning process, a full Traffic Impact Assessment will be required by WDC's Roads section. We have experience of managing similar situations in other parts of the schools estate (e.g. St Peter the Apostle High School and St Eunan's Primary school and Nursery and Dumbarton Academy and St Patrick's Primary School). On the advice of the Roads section, amendments have already been made to the site plan to ensure there is adequate off-road space for school buses within the proposed school campus. Full consideration of traffic matters will be given during the planning application process.

4.9.14 *The scoring matrix used to select the Bellsmyre site was not fully explained and was flawed, with undue weighting given to cost*

The scoring methodology was sound and appropriate. The scoring matrix was provided in an appendix to the consultation report which was submitted to Committee on 5 March 2014 and was further explained at the public consultation meeting. Each of 16 potential sites was scored on a 5-point scale against 6 criteria (overall cost; size; roads, access and planning; location, site condition and topography; impact on other Council priorities; scope for community use). While none of the available sites is ideal, Bellsmyre scored 3 points higher than any other site and 7 points higher than

the next highest scoring site in Dumbarton. Cost was given equal weighting to all other factors.

4.9.15 *Inferior sports provision compared with PPP schools and Dumbarton Academy; sports facilities do not meet SportScotland's recommended standards for a school of 1000 pupils; concern that there are no plans for a swimming pool; safety hazards associated with the pitch located across the road*

As explained in paragraph 4.6.1 above, there was no practical and affordable site in Dumbarton which afforded sufficient space for a third sports pitch. The proposed provision is also superior to the provision of sports facilities in many schools in other Council areas. Sports facilities will be a significant improvement on those available on the present site. The current plans, which may be further amended, include 2 full size 3G football pitches, one with floodlighting, plus 3 external sports courts and a 6-lane 80m sprint track with indoor facilities including 2 gyms, a fitness room and a 3-court games hall with retractable seating and a 1st floor viewing gallery. The rear of the site will also be available for use as an orienteering course and the Bellsmyre Community Trust is developing a mountain bike track adjacent to the proposed school site. These sports areas will facilitate delivery of a full PE curriculum and extra-curricular sporting activities in high quality facilities. Currently, the school has only one external pitch.

While the Council will always try to maximise sports facilities within a new school, there is no requirement for Councils to adhere to Sport Scotland's recommendations. Indeed, there is probably no mainstream state school in Scotland which meets SportScotland's aspirational recommended standards for sports facilities in schools. Even the school in West Dunbartonshire with the best sports facilities (and some of the best of any school in the country) – St Peter the Apostle High School – falls short of the SportScotland recommended provision in certain respects.

A swimming pool was never part of the brief for the new OLSP, regardless of which site was chosen.

One of the two pitches will be on the other side of Howattshaws Road, a road in a residential area, from the main school campus and, following a full risk assessment, any necessary measures will be taken to ensure that this pitch is safely accessible for staff and pupils.

4.9.16 *The decision to recommend Bellsmyre was taken with undue haste and without full consideration of all the options.*

All possible sites were carefully considered. Officers were able to arrive relatively quickly at the decision to recommend the Bellsmyre site in preference to the other sites because a significant amount of analysis of the various alternative sites had been carried out previously when the Posties Park site was under consideration. Several of the other sites were obviously unsuitable and/or unaffordable.

4.9.17 *The consultation process was flawed, with insufficient time for the local community to express their views; there should have been at least two sites offered as options.*

The Council has conducted full consultation with all stakeholders in line with the requirements (including timescales) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. Letters were sent to all statutory consultees. The consultation meeting was well publicised and open to all and advertisements were placed in the local press reminding the public of the closing date for submissions. Local residents and the wider public will also have a further opportunity to express their views through the formal planning process should the decision be taken by the Educational Committee to relocate the school to the Bellsmyre site.

There is no requirement to offer more than one option as part of the consultation process. With the exception of the previous OLSP consultation, offering the options of Posties Park or the existing school site, all previous school consultation processes conducted by West Dunbartonshire Council have consulted on a single site. In this case, the Bellsmyre site scored so much more highly than all other sites in Dumbarton that offering a second option was not considered appropriate.

4.9.18 *Concerns about increased traffic, causing disruption to the Bellsmyre community during the construction phase of the project.*

Access arrangements to the site will be considered as part of any planning application and it is likely that if planning permission is granted that a condition addressing access arrangements to the site during construction works would be imposed. This may include restrictions on construction traffic movements during peak traffic times such as the start and end of the school day. The contractors, BAM Construction, are members of the Considerate Constructors Scheme and have a very strong track record in minimising disruption during construction of the 5 schools which they have previously provided for the Council.

4.10 Other issues raised

4.10.1 *The Council should lobby bus companies to improve evening bus services in Bellsmyre.*

Although the Council has no direct influence over the provision of public bus routes, a matter which is driven by commercial considerations and driven by demand, the Council will speak to First Bus and other providers to explore the possibility of expanding the evening service to Bellsmyre if this proposal is approved. However, it should be noted that, as detailed in section 4.9.3 above, there is an existing evening bus service to and from Bellsmyre.

4.10.2 *Any traffic remodelling which may be required as a result of this proposal should be carried out timeously.*

This would be addressed during the consideration of any planning application for the new school. .

4.10.3 *The Council should continue to work with parents, staff and the Catholic Church to address any ongoing issues.*

This is exactly what the Council has done previously in relation to other new school projects.

Officers will continue to engage with all relevant stakeholders throughout the design and construction phases of the project, with a strong emphasis on effective communication with and engagement of stakeholders through the implementation of a communications plan.

4.11 Other sites

4.11.1 Although the consultation invited respondents to express a preference for or against the Bellsmyre site, other sites were recommended by some respondents.

4.11.2 In particular, a number of respondents who wished to see the school remaining in the west end of Dumbarton recommended the former convent site in Clerkhill. Although this site is situated close to the existing school site and was itself formerly used as a school site, there are a number of significant drawbacks with the Clerkhill site. These drawbacks were detailed in the report presented to the Educational Services Committee on 8 January 2014 but are repeated here for clarity and completeness:

- the site is too small to accommodate playing fields, which would require to be provided at Havoc Park, creating logistical and accessibility problems, given that Havoc lies well below the convent site and is extremely exposed to the elements;
- the steep gradient of the slope between Clerkhill and Havoc could mean that disabled pupils would be unable to access the sports facilities;
- access to the site is poor; the current access road would require significant upgrading and it may be a requirement of planning that a secondary access road be created, with significant financial implications;
- a railway line runs under part of the site, making permission for a major construction project a significant issue;
- the site contains a listed building – the old convent chapel – and it is likely to be a planning requirement that this building be incorporated into the school design, a complex and expensive undertaking which, given the fact that the school design is at a relatively advanced stage could compromise the overall design of the school;
- the site is not owned by the Council but by the Notre Dame Order of nuns.

For all of the above reasons, this site received a very low score in a desktop evaluation which was previously conducted on a number of potential sites. It should also be noted that the Clerkhill site would still lag significantly behind the Bellsmyre site in the scoring grid if the land lay within the Council's ownership or if it were gifted to the Council.

4.12 Conclusion

- 4.12.1** One of the challenges in this consultation process has been the fact that there is no ideal site for the new Our Lady and St Patrick's High School in either Dumbarton or Vale of Leven.
In such circumstances, compromises have to be made, while continuing to strive to deliver a school campus and building of the highest possible quality.
- 4.12.2** While it is true that the majority of consultees who made a response expressed opposition to the Bellsmyre site, it is worth noting that there were only 54 submissions, as against 515 submissions and a petition with 1157 signatories in relation to the Posties Park/Castlehill proposals.
- 4.12.3** While the school's staff groups who made submissions expressed opposition to the Bellsmyre site, it is worth noting that the majority of staff supported the Posties Park option in the last consultation and remain disappointed that their views did not hold more sway.
- 4.12.4** The response of the Archdiocese of Glasgow was a neutral one, expressing neither support nor opposition to the Bellsmyre location. Rather, the Archdiocese sought reassurance on a number of specific points and these are responded to in sections 4.9 and 4.10 above. In light of these responses, and following further discussions, the Archdiocese is further considering its position.
- 4.12.5** This report has recorded accurately the various objections raised against the Bellsmyre site and has attempted to answer each point in turn. It is clear that any challenges associated with the Bellsmyre site can be addressed and that a new school of very high quality can be constructed on this site. It should also be remembered that the Bellsmyre site received easily the highest score in the scoring process conducted on the 16 potential sites, especially when compared to the other Dumbarton sites. If the Bellsmyre site were to be rejected, then the highest scoring alternative sites would be the Dillichip and Argyle Park sites in Vale of Leven, sites for which no one has expressed support. It should also be noted that BAM Construction, as the chosen contractors, are very positive about the potential of the Bellsmyre site.
- 4.12.6** For these reasons, it is recommended that Committee approve the selection of the Bellsmyre site as the location of the new Our Lady and St Patrick's High School. A map showing the current proposals for the layout of the school on the site is included as Appendix 1 to this report.

5. People Implications

- 5.1** Because this is a like-for-like replacement of a school, there are no direct personnel implications.
- 5.2** Some additional staffing capacity will be required during the planning and construction phases of the project. This has been budgeted for, using the contribution to the project from the Council's Capital Programme.
- 5.3** If the proposal is approved, work will be undertaken to support staff to overcome individual and collective issues which they may have with the Bellsmyre site.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1** The capital budget for this project is £22.65m, £14m from the Scottish Government as revenue funding via the Scottish Futures Trust and £8.65m from the Council's Capital Programme.
- 6.2** Due to the nature of the Scottish Government's financial contribution to the project which is from the Scottish Government's revenue budget this project requires to operate as a Design, Build, Finance and Manage (DBFM) contract. One of the conditions of the Scottish Government funding relates to the ongoing maintenance of the school in relation to Hard FM (Facilities Management) and Lifecycle Maintenance and these elements requires to operate under this DBFM arrangement with the Council requiring to commit to provide funding of this work through a payment each year to the school operator.
- 6.2.1** The operation of the school would be by a subsidiary of hub West Scotland Ltd and the service charge payment for the provision of the school and its maintenance would be through the Council, with the Scottish Government passing revenue funding to the Council to pay for the Scottish Government's element of funding of the school. The Council's share of the cost of the school would be paid as a capital payment on completion of the school. The Council's ongoing contribution to the maintenance of the property would be an ongoing revenue contribution.
- 6.3** The potential capital receipt arising from a successful sale of the current school site of £1,250,000, was not assumed within the capital programme for reasons of prudence.
- 6.4** It should be noted that the Scottish Government contribution is capped at 66.7% of the capital costs of the project based on a set costing matrix for schools. Any spend over and above this matrix derived value will be 100% the responsibility of the Council. Such increase in cost could be as a result of increased specification, additional works relating to other (non-school) facilities and additional developments. This equates to a build cost of £21m and the additional £1.65m built into the outline capital budget is intended to cover additional costs in relation to specialist reports, staffing, any infrastructure upgrades and construction inflation.
- 6.5** It was reported to Committee in 8 January 2014 that failure to agree a site for the new school at that time could necessitate the de-coupling of the OLSP project from the East Renfrewshire Project to construct a new Barrhead High School, with some resultant negative financial implications for both councils. Since that time, a Court of Session ruling on a Common Good matter relating to the Barrhead High project means that East Renfrewshire is now facing a delay of several months on their project. This may mean that the two projects can be "re-coupled" and that both Councils can therefore benefit from resultant savings.
- 6.6** Monies already expended or committed on the OLSP project to date amount to £0.818 million. This sum would not be recoverable if the project had to be abandoned for any reason.

6.7 Investment Opportunity

As a shareholder in hub West Scotland Ltd the Council will be provided with an opportunity to invest in the financing of the development. Under the partnership agreement the public body shareholders are entitled to take-up up to 30% of the sub debt funding requirement of the project. This will offer an opportunity to obtain investment returns which can be used to offset the revenue impact of the borrowing for the school. More information on this will become available as work progressed through the procurement with hub West Scotland Ltd. Such an investment opportunity would only be possible if the Council is in a financial position to invest at the time the opportunity arises.

7. Risk Analysis

- 7.1** Failure to continue to regenerate the schools estate would mean that the condition of the school buildings would continue to deteriorate, leading to increased inequalities for young people and reputational damage for the Council.
- 7.2** Further delays to the approval of this project would lead to additional costs. Approval of the Bellsmyre proposal would mean that the new OLSP would be programmed to open in August 2016.
- 7.3** The risks of failing to complete the project (if approved) on time and within budget will be controlled via robust project management based on the Council's substantial and successful recent experience in delivering schools projects. The expertise of Hub West Scotland and the Scottish Futures Trust will also help to control this risk.
- 7.4** The site does not have the benefit of planning permission. Residents, the wider public and Key Agencies will be consulted as part of planning process and will have an opportunity to submit representations.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 8.1** This project will improve the quality of educational experience for young people attending OLSP and there are therefore no negative impacts relating to equality issues. Indeed, the project will ensure that all mainstream secondary pupils in West Dunbartonshire experience education in establishments of similar standards and quality. This was confirmed by a screening which was carried out for equalities impact.

9. Consultation

- 9.1** This project has been the subject of extensive discussion by the Strategic Asset Management Group and the Corporate Management Team as well as by Council and the Educational Services Committee.
- 9.2** The Chief Executive, Legal Services, the Section 95 Officer, the Executive Director of Regeneration and Infrastructure, the Capital Investment Programme Manager and Planning and Roads officers have been consulted on the content of this report.

9.3 Consultation with all statutory consultees has been conducted on the proposals in this report in accordance with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

9.4 There will also be full public consultation in line with planning regulations on this proposal if approved by committee.

10. Strategic Assessment

10.1 The project to construct a new Our Lady and St Patrick's High School will make a significant contribution to the delivery of the Council's strategic priorities of Economic Regeneration and Improved Outcomes for Children and Young People. It will also complete the full regeneration of West Dunbartonshire Council's mainstream secondary school estate within a 7 year period.

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Appendices: Appendix 1: proposed site layout for the Bellsmyre site

Appendix 2: Education Scotland report on the educational benefits of the proposal

Background Papers: Council Report 6 February 2013: 10 Year Capital Programme

Educational Services Committee Report 15 May 2013: Regeneration of the Schools Estate: Our Lady and St Patrick's High School

Educational Services Committee Report 11 September 2013: Proposal Paper and launch of statutory consultation on the location of the new Our Lady and St Patrick's High School

Educational Services Committee Report 8 January 2014: Results of the statutory consultation on the location of the new Our Lady and St Patrick's High School

Educational Services Committee Report 5 March 2014:
Proposal Paper and launch of statutory consultation on
the location of the new Our Lady and St Patrick's High
School

Minutes of Educational Services Committee 5 March
2014

Notes of public meeting on 26 March 2014, meeting of
OLSP school staff on 31 March, and meeting of OLSP
Pupil Council on 31 March 2013

Equalities Impact Screening

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Wards Affected:

Wards 1.2 and 3